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LABOUR ORGANISER

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PUTNEY C.L.P.—Applications are invited for the post of full-time Secretary/Agent. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from Councillor John H. James, 168 Upper Richmond Road, S.W.15. Last date for return of forms 31st July.

RUTLAND and STAMFORD C.L.P.—Applications are invited for the post of full-time Secretary/Agent. (Trade Union sponsored candidate.) Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from Mr. Gordon Thomas, Lansbury Hall, Stamford, Lincs., to whom they must be returned by 31st July, 1953.

SHEFFIELD TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL.—Applications are invited from experienced agents for the post of Secretary/Organiser. Salary and conditions in accordance with national agreement. Application forms obtainable from Mr. J. Madin, J.P., 40½ Bank Street, Sheffield 1, to be returned not later than 31st July, 1953.

EPPING C.L.P.—Applications are invited for the post of full-time Secretary/Agent. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Housing accommodation available. Application forms from Mr. A. F. Nicholls, 22 Simmons Lane, Chingford, E.4, to whom they must be returned not later than the 31st July.

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THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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PRICE FIVEPENCE

Policy Plus Organisation

OUR members have been looking forward to the publication of the statement of policy, which the National Executive Committee is to submit to the Party Conference in September. Whatever its merits or demerits, *Challenge to Britain* will be the subject of discussion at Party meetings during the next few months. This is how it should be. Decisions finally taken, at Margate, on the future policy of the Party should reflect the considered opinions of the rank and file.

It would be a great mistake, however, to permit the policy debate to overshadow other forms of Party activity. The long and (occasionally) sunny days of summer are the most suitable for making direct contact with the electors. And it is the electors who will decide whether or not the Labour Party will have an opportunity of carrying out its policy.

Recruiting new members, canvassing for information for the records and distributing propaganda material are forms of activity which should be stepped up during the next few months. The finest statement of policy the world has ever known will be only a collection of words unless there is strong and efficient organisation to turn it into reality.

THANK YOU!

DURING the past six months the circulation of the *Labour Organiser* has increased by over 1,000 a month, despite the restriction of subscriptions to members of the Labour Party. This welcome increase has been due to the decision of a substantial number of Constituency Labour Parties to take supplies for the benefit of their officers and key-workers, and also to our contributors, who have shown by their articles on the many and varied aspects of Party organisation that the *Labour Organiser* is an indispensable part of the equipment of the Labour activist.

REVISING WARD BOUNDARIES

by

T. W. VERNON

EVERY Labour Party should to-day give some thought to taking action which could secure an improvement in its electoral chances (a) by a re-allocation of councillors amongst the wards; and (b) by a re-organisation of the wards, i.e., a re-division of the area.

The necessary steps are, in themselves, simple enough. The Home Secretary has to be petitioned and, if he thinks some cause has been shown for considering specified changes, he will appoint an Inspector to hold a Local Inquiry.

The petitioning party—or body of electors—and all interested organisations state their case at the Inquiry, cross-examine each other's spokesmen and witnesses and, in general, say all they wish to be considered. The Inspector reports his views to the Home Secretary and, after some interval, the Home Secretary pronounces his decision.

Original Allocation

In all probability, every local party will find that the original allocation of so many councillors to each of the wards was based on a formula which paid equal regard to the population and rateable value of each ward. The allocation would have been the *mean* between (a) the entitlement as a proportion of the population of the whole area and (b) the entitlement as a proportion of the total rateable value of the whole area.

This paying of regard to rateable value inherits from the House of Lords' debate on the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835. The idea was to give more weight (i.e. more councillors) to votes in the rich than in the poor wards. An amendment to that effect was inserted into the Bill and this anti-democratic device has survived in municipal electoral law over the century since elapsed.

But it has ceased to be observed since well before 1939. That is to say, rateable value is disregarded at any Inquiry when the petitioners ask for a re-allocation on

the strict basis of electorate.

Now that the local government franchise is universal, and because it is often the case that substantial rateable values relate to properties owned by companies (with one on the Electoral Register to exercise the vote), the 1835 device is recognised as obnoxious. In my own Borough (St. Marylebone, London) we recently secured a complete re-allocation which totally ignored rateable values and divided up our 60 councillors according to the proportionate electorate of each ward. The Metropolitan Boroughs of Chelsea and Greenwich have had similar experiences, also recently.

At an Inquiry, you might have a Chamber of Commerce (or a badly instructed spokesman of the Tories perhaps) seeking to retain the old privilege of wealth for one or more wards where there is a heavy rateable value and, possibly, a small electorate. Not much time needs to be wasted on such advocacy, since the Home Office officials will in any case advise the Home Secretary to follow precedents and to aim at ensuring that each councillor represents approximately the same number of electors.

But some propaganda advantage can be gained by exposing such opponents, especially by showing what lower number of electors would secure a councillor and the evident unfairness thereby done to electors in other wards; by quoting the rateable value of a number of properties that are Companies owned and carry no votes and asking what justification there can be for utilising such values on behalf of electors happening to live within the same ward.

By contrast with the work and controversy arising from other changes (e.g. ward boundaries), a petition to re-allocate is almost a walk-over, because there can be no serious or successful opposition to it. It would be sensible to invite the Conservative Party—and any other political organisation concerned in municipal elections to discuss such a re-allocation. An agreed proposal for revision can then be taken to the Home Secretary and he will probably decide not to go to the expense and trouble of an Inquiry. If there is agree-

ment, it could be adopted by the Council and then forwarded to the Home Secretary by the Town Clerk; that's quite the best course.

A ward revision might involve changing boundaries between wards; of reducing the number of wards by amalgamations; of increasing the number of wards; or a combination of all these. The first thing to consider is the answer to a seldom-asked question: Why do wards exist at all? Thereby an answer can be found to the obscure problem of what principles have to be followed in drawing ward boundaries.

I use the word 'obscure', because there is no guidance in the Acts. My own experience has been that a little historical research is necessary into the origin of ward electorates.

Conception of Ward

The conception of a ward is, of course, quite ancient. But in former times wards were units of local government. What we are concerned about is the division of an electorate into wards *for purposes of electing councillors*. For wards have no meaning or function except as electoral machinery; and then only in relation to elections for a local Council.

It must be clear that, if the electorate were not divided into wards, an election at large would result in all the seats going to whatever party enjoyed an all-over majority in the town or area. There could not be any minority. Where the electorate is divided up into a number of smaller electorates (on a geographical division) there is some chance for a party to win a few seats, even though it is in a minority position within the area as a whole.

The most informative study of the origin of wards as *electoral machinery* is to be found, I think, in a book published in 1952—"The English Local Government Franchise" by B. Keith-Lucas, Senior Lecturer in Local Government in the University of Oxford. It is very well worth while study by everyone interested in our problem.

Mr. Keith-Lucas recites interesting details about the House of Lords debate on the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act. It

appears that Lord Lyndhurst, a main opponent of the Bill, introduced an amendment to extend the system of wards everywhere, but had to be content with a compromise which brought in all towns over 6,000 inhabitants.

Mr. Keith-Lucas summarises the debate around this amendment by remarking that the Lords 'feared that if the councillors were elected at large throughout the whole town, the Radical mob would succeed in excluding every Tory, but if the towns were divided into wards, Tories might be elected in some at least of the richer districts.' I remarked earlier upon the other cunning amendment the Lords secured, i.e. giving the votes in the richer districts more weight, by paying regard to a ward's rateable value. This class-conscious piece of chicanery had also to serve in determining the boundaries of the wards.

This little piece of history makes it clear, I think, that the conception of electoral wards, and their creation on the principle of separating wealthy districts from poorer ones, amounted to a crude attempt at what might be called proportional representation.*

The Commissioners, set up by the 1835 Act to draw the ward boundaries, were governed by the directions of the Act to draw the boundaries in such fashion as to enable the well-to-do to vote amongst themselves and thereby get their men into the Council Chamber.

If anyone cares to study his local ward boundaries, in relation to the location of wealth and poverty in his town at the time the boundaries were fixed, I think he will usually find that the wards approximated to the grouping of wealth and poverty in the town or area. Many of such boundaries remain unchanged to this day, notwithstanding large changes in the social composition of the wards concerned. It is such historical anachronisms that Labour Parties have now to remedy.

(To be concluded)

*No objection is to be made to this, in my opinion. What was objectionable was the 'weighting' of the votes in wealthy wards.

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What Members ARE Thinking

IN the April *Labour Organiser* I posed the question, "What are Members Thinking?" I explained how we in West Fulham were contacting our members and had arranged a pilot survey of their views together with other information useful in planning the activities of a constituency party.

Although the local elections intervened to prevent our completing a "survey" of every member, we have been able to call on all members in one polling district of one of our four wards and to do extensive sampling in all other parts of the constituency.

It is interesting to note that the ward containing the polling district, where lists of volunteer helpers had been compiled from the questionnaire forms, reduced a Tory majority of about 700 to 76. Election literature was bundled up and taken to comrades who we knew would deliver, and this Committee Room was able to "farm out" writing work at the commencement of the election campaign.

Where surveys had been completed the Committee room clerks knew exactly what their members would do, and much time was saved. So much for the practical help aspect of the experiment—now what of the answers to the other questions on the form?

In the national policy section we found that 47.6 per cent of our members were quite satisfied with the way the Labour Party was serving their interests in Parliament, 42.8 per cent were fairly satisfied and 9.6 per cent dissatisfied. Only 4.7 per cent thought the party nationally was too "left", 32.5 per cent said "not left enough" and the largest number (48.5 per cent) thought the party all right as it is; 14.2 per cent said they didn't know!

On nationalisation most members were cautious and our interviewers often heard phrases like—"let's make existing nationalisation a success first". Only 21.4 per cent wanted much more nationalisation; 34.1 per cent a little more; 33.3 per cent none at all and 11.1 per cent didn't know.

We asked members what concerned

them most at the moment and asked them to pick one of nine items. It will surprise no one that the rise in the cost of living was a run-away winner in this section. More than half (57.1 per cent) told us this was their biggest worry.

"Waiting for Housing" came a close second at 15.8 per cent, and rations and subsidies (linked of course with the cost of living) tied for third place with foreign affairs (8.1 per cent). "Taxation level" was 6.3 per cent and commonwealth affairs, Africa, health services, international party affairs and education cuts troubled very few members—at any rate in relation to the "big four" at the top of the list. Education aroused most interest with 31 per cent.

We thought it would be of interest to enquire what newspapers and magazines were read by our members and we were shocked to find that only 46 per cent read the *Daily Herald* regularly; a fraction less than those reading the leading local paper every week (46.75 per cent).

The *Daily Mirror* was seen regularly by 42 per cent, *News Chronicle* 31.5 per cent, *Express* 12 per cent, *Daily Worker* 3 per cent, *Sketch* 3 per cent and no other morning paper got a look in. Only about 60 per cent read any evening paper and the *News* and *Star* just about divided this between them.

An interesting additional note to this is that when asked if they would like to read a Labour evening paper 34.1 per cent said "Emphatically yes", 33.3 per cent said "Yes" and 32.5 per cent couldn't care less. On Sunday only 1.5 per cent didn't see a newspaper, and *Reynolds News* alone reached 27.65 per cent of those questioned so there is room for development here. There was little interest shown in political weeklies and monthlies, and joint sales of *London News*, *Forward* and *Fact* could not equal the combined sales of *Tribune* and *New Statesman*.

On local party domestic affairs a weekly machinery 91.8 per cent received a weekly newsletter every month. Yet 62.35 per cent had never been to a party or section function OF ANY KIND. Less than 10 per cent were kept at home by radio, television and 10.5 per cent by children.

at these figures cannot be considered accurate as most answers indicated a general lack of interest.

Perhaps we were holding meetings on the wrong evenings, so we asked them that, too. Of the members who expressed preference for a particular evening, 8.7 per cent said Tuesday, 7.05 per cent Wednesday, 6.3 per cent Thursday, 6.3 per cent Friday, 3.75 per cent Saturday, 3.75 per cent Monday and 2.25 per cent Sunday.

All wards hold their monthly meeting on a Thursday and in the past Tuesday has been our favourite night for Discussion Drums, so little change is called for here, except to note that Wednesday may be a fair night to hold a meeting.

Only 32.35 per cent of members questioned held union cards, but it must be remembered that many were housewives.

Further interesting analysed answers are—74.85 per cent of those contacted are married, 33.75 per cent have children under 12, and 64.7 per cent of our membership admitted to being over 40 years of age.

If it were possible to produce a composite average party member from this mass of statistics I think he would be something like this: He would probably be over 40 years old and have a family. He would read the *Daily Herald* or the *Daily Mirror* going to work in the morning, and perhaps the *Star* or *Evening News* coming home. On Sunday he would have the *People*, *Editorial* and *News of the World* delivered to his home—if he had a home to call his!

Although he would try to put the Labour point of view in an argument and always pay his party contributions regularly he wasn't interested enough to go to many meetings. He read about M.P.'s activities and thought that the Labour people were putting up a pretty good show "the House".

He certainly didn't think the party was too left, but thought we ought to be very careful about nationalisation. He didn't really think much about Africa, or the Commonwealth, or even our own health service, but he was relieved to see that international tension seemed to be lessening, and he was terribly worried about the cost of living.

Obviously you who read this will not be a bit like my composite man, but then you are not an average party member—you were you would never read the *Labour Organiser*.

DEALING WITH OUR REMOVALS

EVERYONE will agree that one of the most difficult things in party organisation is to get the steady flow of information needed to keep our postal voters' list up to date, and of no less importance to the movement, to keep track of Party members, thus seeing that the least possible wastage occurs.

I cannot claim that in Dorking we are experts in this field, but we do have a steady trickle of information passing through the constituency office about members and supporters who have removed, from one part of the constituency to another, or into a new constituency.

Local secretaries have a removal form and when information is obtained by a local secretary, he fills in this form and lets me have it. From this information I prepare a card, in an index file, giving the name and address of the person, and where he has removed to, and from. The official form R.P.F. 8 is completed ready for signature and forwarded with a covering letter to him at his new address.

I fill in a similar removal form and forward it to the local secretary concerned, if the removal is to another part of this constituency. If it is to another constituency I send the form to that constituency party secretary.

Although we send out a steady trickle of information about removals to other constituencies we get very little back. In the past 18 months I cannot recall having been informed of a Labour Party member or supporter having moved into this constituency, though by canvass we have found ex-members of other constituency parties living here.

It is possible to increase the flow of information on removals which would stop a great deal of the present wastage in membership. The only way to do this is to keep mentioning it at our local party and ward meetings and to supply secretaries with removal forms.

S. NATTRASS

BEING PARTY CHANCELLOR

by F. L. BLOFELD

AFTER the chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary have been chosen at the annual meeting of a local Labour Party, the treasurer is elected. For obvious reasons, the job of looking after the money is an important one, and care should be taken in selecting the man or woman who is to do it. Getting in the money and, at times, advising upon how it should *not* be spent, demand considerable tact and qualities of persistence.

But the most useful asset to a treasurer is a clear and tidy mind: with these attributes the work can be tackled without much previous knowledge of accounts. Of course, it is an advantage if the party has an accountant who is willing to act. Failing such invaluable help, you may be willing to do the work, and what follows may be of some little help. The old hand can skip this contribution.

Receipt Book

First, the tools for the job. You need a receipt book with each receipt numbered. The counterfoil type of book can be used, or you can take a duplicate with carbon paper, in which case, see that your carbon copies can be read easily. The name of the ward or party for which you are acting should be rubber stamped or written upon each receipt.

When you write a receipt, insert a brief reference to the reason for the payment which has been made to you; this is the kind of small point which is sometimes overlooked and it can be irritating to your auditors if the counterfoil or carbon gives no clue to the nature of the income. We all know what often happens; the treasurer, if he is responsible for membership subscriptions, is handed a slip of paper, by a collector, at a busy meeting. The slip contains names and various amounts. Check the total shown on the slip, add the date and the collector's name, and mark the receipt you give to the collector with "subscriptions on list dated"

The author of this article was for many years Honorary Treasurer of the Party's Eastern Regional Council. His contribution, on the work of a Treasurer, forms one of a series dealing with the duties of Party Officers.

All receipts should be clearly written and should be issued without delay.

If you are a newly-appointed treasurer your bank will need a specimen signature and a copy of the resolution confirming your appointment. Two signatures are customary on party cheques and the resolution usually empowers the chairman and treasurer, or the secretary and treasurer, to sign. See that your cheques contain the name of your party making the payment.

To show the name is more businesslike than the use of cheques which indicate their origin only by two signatures, neither of which may be easily read.

If your name is Joe Smyth and you receive a cheque made payable to Joe Smith, you will have to endorse the cheque twice before paying it in, once as Smith and once as Smyth. Bear this kind of carelessness in mind when you yourself are writing cheques: see that you insert the name of the payee with accuracy, otherwise he will be put to needless trouble.

When writing the cheques be careful about the *pounds*; leave no room for the unauthorised insertion of words or figures which, if undetected by your bank, would have an adverse effect upon your balance. This is a commonsense precaution. Finally, use crossed cheques always and take great care of your cheque book.

You will need a petty cash and postage book, and the secretary will need to keep similar records of his outlay. The secretary can be kept supplied at intervals with an agreed small amount of petty cash, for which he will give you a receipt. The auditors will require the secretary's account books in addition to your own.

It is desirable that the details of membership subscription payments and arrears

should be kept in a separate book, the totals received being transferred regularly to your main cash book. The detailed information could include collector's name, member's name, how the subscription should be paid (monthly, quarterly, etc.) and the actual payments as they are made throughout the year. There should be a column for arrears. If this kind of record is used, the attention of collectors can be called to any falling-off in payments, and the total amount of arrears is easily ascertainable for report to the party.

The most important of the treasurer's records is the chief account book. This can be a cash book ruled with several analysis columns, the left-hand page being devoted to Income and the right-hand to Payments. On the Income side, specimen headings to the columns would be: Receipt No., Total, Subscriptions, Affiliation Fees, Socials, Donations, Miscellaneous. Each item is entered twice on the same line, once under the Total column, and once under the appropriate heading, such as Socials.

The columns on the Payments side will be something like this: Cheque No., Total, Rent, Lighting and Heating, Duplicating, or any similar title for payments which have to be made in the course of the year. Keep your account book up to date! The chief advantage of the Total columns is that you can find the balance very quickly by adding up the two columns.

Oral Report

With all your books up to date you are in a position to submit reports to the party for which you act. Except where you are keeping a number of separate accounts for special purposes, an oral report will usually satisfy a Finance or Executive Committee, but for larger gatherings like the General Committee, it is better to have the statements duplicated. It is much easier to follow figures when there is something in black and white to read.

Extract from your account book all that is necessary to show the general position and the detailed position of any special activity. It will be the task of someone else to organise the monthly dance, but it is the treasurer's job to explain the loss, or the profit, if one has been made.

Whether reports are given orally or in

writing, they should be clearly set out. How often have we heard a treasurer reporting like this: "There is a general balance of £25, which is more than last month, and I have had £2 in subscriptions since I came here tonight, plus some bills we ought to pay." From this opening, nobody knows whether to be sad or happy: it is usually safer to feel sad.

Begin your statement with the Balance-in-hand and then give the main headings of Income and Expenditure. Impress upon the meeting the outline of the financial position. Speak slowly and distinctly. Your task is easier if you have nicely prepared duplicated statements, except that just before you rise to speak the Social Secretary will give you some money and the Party Secretary will give you some bills.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting is a special occasion. Your accounts will have been audited beforehand and there should be a statement for each member present. If all have the figures in front of them, it is a mistake for you to go through each item from top to bottom of the sheet: if you do, you will only bore many of those present.

Pick out beforehand the important points upon which you wish to comment, and make detailed notes of any matter likely to give rise to discussion at the meeting. See that on the agenda for the meeting is an item "Vote of Thanks to Auditors". These long-suffering workers deserve it.

Well before the date of the annual meeting you will have arranged to hand over to the auditors all the documents they will require. See that receipts for payments made by you are in the order, in which the entries appear in your cash book. See that the entries in the payments side, representing cheques drawn, correspond to the entries in the pass sheets which your bank will have sent to you.

A simple Income and Expenditure Account will probably suffice to begin with, and when you have presented your audited statement to the annual meeting and have been re-elected the Honorary Treasurer, you can add refinements to your methods in subsequent years. Long may you enjoy this essential and vitally important work for the Party!

HOW TO KEEP GROUP—PA

WHILE we are still rejoicing at the election of many new Labour councillors in this year's May elections, let us give thought to one of the problems which arises out of our success.

When Labour representation on the local authority was confined to two or three members, with an overwhelming majority of anti-Labour members against us, problems of power did not exist. Our small group of members on the Council did their best to present what they thought was, or should be, the policy of Labour.

It was not as a rule necessary for them to be over particular about the detail of policy because, of course, they could very seldom hope to command a majority vote in the council.



In fact, in local, as in national politics, Labour was for some time concerned with *representation* rather than with *government*, and there was little need for formality in the matter of the relationship of the public representatives and the party organisation.

About the Middle Twenties it became clear that the Labour Party could hope to achieve considerable success in local government, and the need for codification of the sometimes rather loose association between the party and the group was beginning to show itself.

It was not, however, until just before the war that Annual Conference adopted standing orders for Labour groups and, even then, the application of the standing orders was to be a matter for local agreement. The evident reluctance of Conference to set up a rigid rule in this matter reflects a deep-seated feeling within the movement that the pattern of behaviour of the various elements making up the party cannot be regulated entirely by rule, but must be governed very largely by good sense and comradeship.

In one feature, however, the model standing orders clearly express the will of the whole Labour movement: that is, that members of the council elected on the Labour ticket must cohere into a group.

This seems so obvious as not to be worthy of mention but, in fact, the coherence of the group is the most important factor in the maintenance of good relations between group and party.

More than this, indeed, for factions within the group frequently cause divisions within the party, which persist long after the original dispute has been forgotten.

It is not surprising that the model standing orders give a good deal of attention to the matter of leadership. In fact, it would scarcely be too much to say that, insofar as these standing orders are specific, the principle of leadership, as an indispensable element in the functioning of a Labour group, is clearly indicated.

The authors of this document may not have been thinking of group-party relations when this was done, but there can be no doubt that unless the chief responsibility is centred upon a fairly small and strictly defined element, the power of the party to influence and guide the group in its policies and actions is severely limited. Sometimes, when differences arise between the group and the party, a desire on the part of some councillors and delegates to weaken the position of the leader of the group shows itself.

A legitimate desire to secure a change in the policy of the group never justifies the deliberate weakening of the position of the leader in relation to the rest of the group.

Given that the democratically chosen leadership is adequately supported, the question arises as to how best legitimate influence by the party on group policy can be brought to bear. This in turn raises the question as to what are council matters upon which the party, outside the group, may reasonably adopt an attitude.

It is, perhaps, easier to answer this negatively than positively. It is *not* proper for a unit of the party to adopt an attitude on, for example, the choice of person to be appointed as an officer of the council. This would usually be agreed without hesitation.

It is equally important that there should be no attempt whatever on the part of the party to influence the group in the individual appointment of the minor staff of the council. Questions of this sort fall

RELATIONS SWEET

★—by—★
J. W. RAISIN

obviously into the category of 'administrative policy' which is the province of the group.

The party's influence is properly exercised in relation to 'electoral policy'. The trouble is that there is sometimes a conflict of opinion as to which is which!

The standing orders come to our help here. They lay it down that the policy on which the election is fought is determined by the party. That is to say that the group cannot decide the policy for itself. The standing orders also say that decision on matters coming before the council is the responsibility of the group. This means that the party cannot instruct the group on any such matter.

So that is clear: the party must determine electoral policy and the group cannot do so, while the group must decide day-to-day policy and the party cannot upset such decisions.

If it were only a matter of rules the question could be left there, but there is more to it than that. The respective powers within the constitution of group and party are well-defined, but what is not well-defined—because it defies definition—is the manner in which these powers should be exercised.

This is where 'liaison' comes in. Liaison is a means of providing a two-way service of information. This is very valuable everywhere to the smooth functioning of the party in relation to the local authority, but it is really essential where the party is in control. It can be achieved in various ways but it cannot be obtained unless both sides (i.e. group and party) are satisfied with the method employed.

One way frequently adopted is for 'lay' members of the party to sit in the group. This method has some merit, but I have not, personally, found that the presence of such persons at group meetings adds much to the information available to the group. A method I favour is for occasional, informal discussions to take place between the leading members of the council on the one hand and some suitably eminent party individuals, on the other. The range of such discussions would be very wide and both sides could, as occasion warranted, speak with complete frankness.

But whatever method is used there must be recognition of the fact that the rights of the group and the rights of the party may, sometimes, conflict. Where that is so, accommodation must be sought. It is of the utmost importance that the group, particularly a majority group, should not withhold an awkward matter from the knowledge of the party until it is too late for the party to express an opinion without risking an open breach.

On the other hand it is not right for the party to seek to use its power to decide electoral policy in such a way as to control the group in a particular administrative action.

These points may be illustrated from two or three recent incidents.

A Constituency Labour Party formed the opinion that aldermanic by-elections were not desirable and this information was conveyed to the group several months before the election. The group nevertheless decided to make a councillor into an alderman. This decision may have been correct in all the circumstances, but before finally deciding the matter, the wishes of the C.L.P. should have been again sought.



A majority Labour group decided upon a course new to this borough, of giving the mayoralty to a Conservative member of the council. This decision was taken, in accordance with local custom, some weeks before the election and press announcements were made. The decision of the group was hotly challenged, and the party was invited to write into the election policy a statement in direct opposition to the group decision. By a narrow majority the party declined so to use its powers. Obviously, in a case of this sort, the views of the party should have been canvassed before the group took its final decision.

A Labour council found that municipal rents were too low. This might have caused a good deal of trouble but, because liaison in this case is really satisfactory (although informal) it was possible to prepare the party for the step and to issue suitable material to party collectors and others in good time. This action probably avoided a good deal of public criticism and it certainly prevented a lot of controversy within the party.

MARKING THAT REGISTER

ARTHUR JOHNSON

describes how to transform the register into the most deadly weapon in an agent's armoury

ESSENTIAL as the canvass is, it must be appreciated that the preservation of canvass records is equally important. The results of the last two general elections, producing as they did an abnormal number of 'marginals', prove that many seats at the next election will be won by the party which conducts its campaign in the most detailed fashion. In fact, an additional vote or two in each street last time would have affected the result in at least 40 constituencies.

One hears reference to the lack of canvassing on the part of our Tory opponents during the last General Election. Some of our workers expressed amazement at this and cast doubt on the value of the canvass during election times. This is partly true as the most valuable canvass is that recorded between elections.

Whatever the merits of election and pre-election canvassing may be, neither serves any useful purpose in the long run unless the records gathered are preserved and a marked register is prepared in great detail for future use.

The case for a marked register is overwhelming, but objections to its preparation are based on the time it takes to compile and the method to be adopted in its marking. Both these problems are easily overcome.

A wise agent, or secretary, will enlist the services of his many workers, especially those who enjoy doing some detailed work away from the party office.

This is how to set about the job. —

Immediately after a canvass, sort out the records under various headings, e.g. members, canvassed promises, known opponents, deaths, removals, postal voters, electors taken to the poll by car, poll cards given up at the polling station, etc. Having separated these in batches, secure them by rubber band—label them, giving clear indications of what each bundle contains, and decide upon the colour or

other symbol to be used in each case.

Having enlisted the services of a number of reliable helpers make each one responsible for a portion of the register, such as a polling district. Give each helper the records corresponding with his section of the register with specific instructions on how to mark, etc., and ask him to complete his task within a certain time.

It is not of course sufficient to mark a register on the result of one canvass alone and call that a marked register. It is necessary to make use of records gathered over a long period to make a marked register really effective.

It will be found that the use of colours alone is not sufficient and other methods of marking must be decided upon. Use can be made of symbols, for instance, such as are used in the Highway Code.

To take an example. Fred Smith is a loyal supporter, he consistently votes for our candidate. A simple mark against his name in a distinctive colour, or symbol, in accordance with the key decided upon, will show at a glance how often he has promised to vote, how often he has gone to the poll and, in fact, will give a complete record of his polling activities.

It is of course unnecessary to canvass Fred at every election. It is just sufficient to ensure that he does in fact go to the poll.

Fred Smiths can be found by thousands in the average constituency. By not canvassing these thousands of Fred Smiths, time is available to canvass newly qualified electors, doubtful voters and even known wavering, Tory voters.

Just as important is the recording of known active Tories, so as to save time by not visiting them. I know of a case where in two separate municipal elections the Tory candidate was canvassed and recorded on the canvass as "doubtful".

The value of a marked register when embarking upon a membership canvass cannot be over emphasised; on the issue of the electors lists, when registration work is undertaken, it will enable the agent to ensure that supporters are not inadvertently left off.

Another use is in connection with publicity. With the advent of the Town

and Country Planning Act, many agents have found that the number of poster sites available is so few that practically no poster publicity is possible. Here is where the window cards are valuable. If it is possible to mark on the register those electors who have shown our window cards, then it is possible to obtain a widespread

Live Secretary

★ AT the end of 1950 the membership in the old East Anglian town of East Dereham (S.W. Norfolk) was 107, but by the end of last year it had gone up to 236—an increase of 129.

For a long time this L.L.P. was dormant, but the appointment of an energetic and capable secretary was soon reflected in progress in many ways.

The Labour Hall soon began to hum with activity—social events and sporting events, ranging from dancing to boxing, were arranged; brains trusts and other educational activities were held, and altogether it became a flourishing time.

Political development was intensified, with the result that in the local elections (1952) three Labour men knocked out three influential Tories, who possessed and publicised a long-standing and outstanding connection with the town. Indeed the Labour candidates topped the poll—an unheard-of and unpardonable offence in Tory eyes!

Perhaps its greatest achievement was in the financial realm, for during the last year its income was £1,000, leaving a credit balance of £300. During the same period the Women's Section made a clear profit of £105.

The moral of this story is obvious, a dynamic and capable secretary can usually galvanise his colleagues into tremendous activity and thereby convert a stagnant political pool into the clear and invigorating water of party life.

The next phase of development should be the buying of literature for distribution in the town and in adjacent places in which there is no organisation. Bacon said that money is like muck; it only does good if it is spread. It is time that parties with large bank balances took this wise and apt saying to heart. Now is the time to take full advantage of the subsidised literature scheme.

W.T.Y.

window card display as part of the publicity campaign during an election.

There are many cases where an agent has conducted an election with very successful results, using only a marked register to obtain his vote. It is absolutely certain that the great majority of Tory agents are becoming more and more practised in the art of using records to obtain their vote and in many cases to win elections.

It is commonly accepted that the Tories pull their vote much more easily than our party does and that they know where their vote is. There is no magic formula in this. It is just that the Tories have got into their election and organising machine that detail which is lacking in ours.

They pay great attention to the matter of records and marked registers, and when our agents do the same, we shall save time and energy in our canvass, obtain a higher percentage coverage of the electorate, and be more certain of the extent of our solid support and of the whereabouts of our vote.

RAISE FUNDS

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DRAW TICKETS

- ▶ Exclusive designs that create interest—stimulate sales.
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- ▶ Multi-colour Designs.
- ▶ Over forty inset designs including the Labour Party Emblem.

Numerous Labour Party branches already supplied.

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KEEPING RECORDS UP TO DATE

LESLIE HILLIARD

concludes his series of articles on
how a big membership is handled

HAVING relieved the P.D. secretaries of the responsibility of supervising collectors, it became necessary to find a simple and reliable method of ensuring that ward membership records were kept up to date and information passed on to the wards speedily, since the distribution of ward notices and other communications is based upon such records.

A duplicate card index of members based upon households was started. Standard and duplicator postcards were used and forms were duplicated in the office. These were issued in simple cardboard containers to all P.D. secretaries.

It was not necessary in our case to issue this record to the Ward secretary as he arranges for distribution of notices through the P.D. secretaries.

Changes are notified as follows:

- (a) As new members are made an office and a P.D. index card is made out.
- (b) Monthly, index cards are sent to all P.D. Secretaries in respect of *new* members, as well as details of members reported 'dead', 'removed' and 'lapsed' in each P.D., with the request that 'lapsed' members be called on.
- (c) Members reported to the P.D. secretaries as 'lapsing' are held in a 'suspense' section of the office files until a report is obtained from the P.D. secretary.
- (d) When the P.D. secretary reports the 'lapsing' cards are withdrawn. If the member agrees to continue to pay the card is reinstated in the 'live' section of the office file.
- (e) All cards in respect of confirmed 'lapsed' members, removals and deaths are returned by the P.D. secretaries, monthly, to the office and in this way we can ensure that local records in the wards are kept up to date.
- (f) Once a year the P.D. secretaries' index cards are checked against the office records and inaccuracies adjusted.

All this sounds very complicated, but it

takes very little time and works extremely well. It does, require, however, a high standard of responsibility from P.D. secretaries.

It will be appreciated that none of the material used is costly and most of the forms, cards, etc., are produced on a duplicator. The only printed form employed is that for the collectors' book and this could be duplicated were it not for the fact that a rather hard paper is required, which does not take duplicating well because of its surface.

It will possibly be asked 'What does all this mean in terms of time?' So far as office administration is concerned the time required specifically for the tasks mentioned is approximately four hours weekly.

The collecting is done mainly on Sunday morning and involves about two hours on each book. The other contributions are dealt with, in the main, on Monday nights, and require another two to three hours. It is usual for our collectors to leave odd callbacks (the outs, etc.) until Friday nights when they are made just prior to reporting to the office, so that each week's collections are 'cleared'.

All payments are made to the office between 6.30 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Friday nights and by 9 p.m. cash is balanced and entries completed.

It is very essential that the right people should be chosen for the work and that the minimum amount of re-organisation should go on. A collector must enjoy his work and come to know his people intimately. He is the only 'human' point of contact the member has with the party, in the main, where mass memberships exist.

He must be fully briefed on party activity and be in a position to offer advice and see that members are directed to the right persons if in difficulty. He must be a 'goodwill' earner.

Our briefing is effected by circulating periodic collectors 'newsletters', with advance details of party and ward activities for information, and by having occasional meetings to talk over common problems so that each side, the collectors and the

office, can then understand each other's difficulties and problems. The collecting staff have to be welded into a team prepared to work together for the benefit of the party as a whole. Success here depends upon the choice of individuals.

Finally, it is very important to always have 'reserves' available. Sudden ill health, rapid growth in membership, and similar factors constantly arise and demand additions to the staff, or imme-

diate replacements. Having suitable people 'lined up' is essential.

It is hoped that these articles will have proved of interest to those parties and agents who are contemplating a part-time or paid system of collecting. The regular collection of members' contributions is the basic organisation task of the party and, with the mass membership we are now achieving, methods of effective control and administration become of vital importance.

(Concluded)

REG UNDERHILL describes a

Useful Progress Chart

I WAS interested in the article by Raymond Dillon on Committee Room Aids which appeared in the April *Labour Organiser*. The West Midlands Regional Council a few years ago recognised the need for a standardised chart for use in Committee Rooms.

Soon after I came into the West Midlands I noticed that in common with most other areas very few committee rooms kept a visual record of work done. If records were kept at all, they were often on loose sheets of paper or in a notebook kept by the election organiser. If he was out, no-one knew for certain what work remained to be done. More often than not this knowledge only resided in the organiser's memory!

The Regional Council therefore decided to publish a simple chart, and many thousands have now been used in all parts of the region. They are sold at the low cost price of 3d. each, and how much confusion has been avoided by this expenditure of a few pence.

The charts are double-crown and are headed:

ELECTORS

PROGRESS CHART

HOUSES _____

POLLING DISTRICT _____

COMMITTEE ROOM

Thus the first clear records are the numbers of houses and electors covered by the

Committee. This information itself is valuable.

There are 26 ruled lines across the chart—each one inch apart. These enable 26 roads to be covered by one chart, the name of the roads being clearly inserted in a $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. column on the left of the chart.

There are seventeen columns ruled across the chart—each 1 in. wide. The first two are for No. of houses and No. of electors—these are important for they enable committee room workers to bundle up and label the actual number of items to be delivered in a particular road, whether one per elector or one per house.

The next two columns are for 'Preliminary Letter' (written and delivered), then a further two for 'Election Address' (written and delivered). Then follow three columns for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Canvass, and another six for 'Other Deliveries' with a small space at the head of each column for inserting the nature of the item. Two additional columns are given for other use as required.

The date the particular job was completed is inserted in the appropriate column alongside the respective road—to be effective this information must be marked up promptly. If this is done we then have a simple Progress Chart, easy to keep up to date, cheap, and giving a visual record, which, pasted on the wall, cannot be mislaid, of work completed and still outstanding. All the information required can be seen at a glance.

Around the Regions

SCOTS PLAN ALL OUT DRIVE

SINCE the Municipal elections in May we have begun our work to increase individual membership. Our individual membership in 1952 was 70,540, the highest on record. This year we have set ourselves a target of 100,000.

Constituency Labour Parties are planning now for an all-out drive in August-September-October, which we find to be the best months for recruitment, free from holidays, free from local elections and with a reasonable chance of good weather for outdoor propaganda and canvassing.

Most of the Scottish Labour M.P.s have given dates in this period when they will address meetings in marginal and other constituencies. Of course, public meetings are not enough. These must be followed up by positive action to secure enrolments. Special E.C. meetings are being held in the constituencies to plan the campaign, and each C.L.P. has its share of the Scottish target to reach.

In the county constituencies, which were not taking part in municipal elections, the campaign has already begun and the results so far are very good. For instance, North Lanarkshire ended 1952 with 2,735 individual members which was a 54 per cent increase over 1951; to-day, 1st June, 1953, this constituency has passed the 4,000 mark and is still going strong. South Ayrshire, which ended 1952 with 4,758 individual members, has 6,500 cards out and is busily enrolling new members.

To go back to the C.L.P.'s now setting out on their campaigns—extraordinary special meetings of Ward Committees and Local Labour Parties are being held to get down to the job in the localities. *The greatest insistence is upon having a proper collecting system established BEFORE recruiting large numbers of new members.*

This lesson is certainly being well applied. Ayr C.L.P. have appointed a full-time paid collector. Many others having appointed one, two or even three part-time paid collectors. C.L.P.'s in Scotland are taking the view that it is good business to employ full-time collectors to build up membership BEFORE any consideration is given to the appointment of full-time

agents. First have membership and assured income and then consider agency appointments.

It goes without saying that the greatest part of the work is done by volunteers, always unpaid, but with the zeal to do their bit in building up the Party.

Of course, we find constituencies where there has been reluctance to tackle the job. But one by one these constituencies, which are in the main the ones where Labour majorities are weighed and not counted, are now overcoming their prejudices and apathy and some indeed have made very good beginnings.

Others again, like the marginal and rural constituencies are being heartened by their successes and are being encouraged thereby to make greater efforts.

By plenty of hard work, properly planned, and with resolute persistence, perhaps we can reach our highlight of 100,000 members by 'Auld years Nicht'.

Scottish

W. G. MARSHALL

Midlands Rally

THE East Midlands Regional Council is this year embarking on a new venture in organising a rally. It is taking place in the spacious grounds of the Co-operative College, Stanford Hall, near Loughborough, where the whole of the facilities of the college and its grounds are at our disposal on 5th September.

These include a theatre, which will seat 300, where C.W.S. films will be shown at frequent intervals. The outdoor facilities include swimming, putting, bowls, tennis and cricket.

The cricket ground is of county standard and has been the scene of many first class matches, featuring test players from England and overseas. Stanford Hall once belonged to Sir Julien Cahn and as a hobby he ran a cricket team full of county players, which he captained, and with which he toured the world. The ground will see another famous match when the East Midlands Parliamentary

Labour Group will meet the Regional Council team. Ian Winterbottom, M.P. is to captain the M.P.'s XI.

A number of constituencies in Leicestershire are co-operating with us in the promotion of the side shows.

The political side is not being neglected and our chief speaker is the Rt. Hon. Harold Wilson, M.P. We are also hoping to arrange for a speaker to represent both the Trade Union and the Co-operative movements.

There are ample parking facilities for the cars and coaches which will bring our people from all corners of the region. Given a fine day we are hoping to have a rally that will be remembered for a long time and which may be the fore-runner of many of a similar character in the future.

East Midlands J. CATTERMOLÉ

Interesting Unions

THE difficulty of involving affiliated trade union branches into the activities of the Party has been the concern of Constituency and Local Labour Parties for a long time. Unfortunately, there is no highway to success in solving this problem. Recently, the Regional Council decided to seek the help of the affiliated trade unions in this matter. A circular was sent making the suggestion that their branches should be urged to appoint a Political Officer whose duties might be:—

1. To ensure that delegates appointed by the branch regularly attend Labour Party meetings.
2. That reports of delegates should be a feature on the agenda at each branch meeting.
3. The Political Officer should be responsible for receiving and distributing literature in the branch on behalf of the Labour Party.
4. As frequently as possible bring to the notice of the members of the branch the need for closer association with the Labour Party by becoming individual members.

It was pointed out that if these suggestions were put into operation the relationship between the Trade Unions and the Party would be greatly improved and that organisations of the Party would be very much strengthened.

Many of the Trade Union organisations, including the Transport & General

Workers, the General & Municipal Workers, the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, the National Union of Mine-workers (Northumberland Area), the Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers and the National Union of Railwaymen, have circularised their branches as suggested and reports to hand indicate that a number have appointed Political Officers. How far the efforts of these officers will improve the relationship of the trade union branch with the Party remains to be seen. All that can be hoped is that in the interest of both Party and the trade union, some improvement will be achieved.

Northern

W. B. LEWCOCK.

Professional Canvass

FOUR men and a woman, with black folders tucked under their arms, became a familiar sight in the streets of Brierley Hill—they were members of the Party's first full-time canvassing team. Brierley Hill, the first constituency to test this new experiment, is marginal with a 2,298 Labour majority.

Detailed arrangements were made at a consultation between the Constituency Agent, Assistant Regional Organiser and myself, including the areas to be covered and a detailed time-table for the full period, literature to be obtained and preparations of the canvass register.

It was decided to concentrate in wards of the Brierley Hill urban district and to also cover the very small urban district of Amblecote. These are typical black country areas and, although mainly strong Labour, the redistribution link-up with a rural district makes the constituency very marginal. Organisation is indifferent, membership inadequate at 1,198, and in many areas there is a traditional objection to formal canvassing.

It was, therefore, decided to carry through both an information and a membership canvass. With many women at work in local industries many "outs" were expected and a special letter was duplicated to be left in such instances. It was also decided the team should not issue membership cards or collect the initial subscription — this would be done in a follow-up by local members.

Five comrades met at the regional office

(Continued on back page)

CANDIDATES APPLY FOR RELIEF

Late Returns

ELEVEN councillors and four unsuccessful candidates, all Labour candidates at the election of councillors to Nantyglo and Blaina Urban District Council in May, 1952, made application at Abertillery County Court on June 9th, 1953, for relief from the consequences of alleged contraventions of the Representation of the People Act, 1949.

The contraventions related to the failure to send in returns of expenses within the statutory period and the payment of a printer's bill outside the statutory period.

One of the councillors, William Henry Hambleton of Nantyglo, acted as election agent for all the Labour candidates at the election.

Mr. D. Granville West, M.P., representing the applicants, submitted that the acts or omissions could not have influenced the election. It had been the duty of Mr. Hambleton to send in the returns within 35 days after the day on which the declaration of the poll was made, that was before the 9th June, 1952. Also, he was required to make a declaration before a Justice of the Peace, and the candidates had a responsibility to make a declaration before a Justice of the Peace that they had inspected the returns and believed them to be accurate.

"The foundation of these applications is that the election agent did not transmit the returns, and also the declarations of the candidates were not transmitted. That constitutes an illegal practice, and the person who is guilty is subject to very serious penalties," Mr. West said.

"If a candidate sits in the council and votes before the returns have been transmitted, he is liable to a penalty of £50 a day for every day he sits and votes at a council meeting." Mr. West added that the printer's bill had not been paid within 28 days after the results of the election had been declared.

The candidates had had complete confidence in Mr. Hambleton. They had believed that all necessary steps had been taken. They said that the contraventions arose by reason of the ill-health, pressure of work, domestic worries, and oversight

of the election agent, and not from want of good faith. They did not believe these acts had affected the election.

Mr. Hambleton had been a councillor since 1946, and had been again returned in 1952. He had acted as agent for all the Labour candidates in 1946, 1949, and 1952. He was secretary of Nantyglo and Blaina Trades Council and Labour Party, and had had a most strenuous and exacting life; he had begun to feel the strain of his many duties. His wife had been ill for ten years, and his father's death had been a shock to him, so that he was feeling extremely tired and ill. He had enclosed a medical certificate with his affidavit.

The applications were opposed by an unsuccessful Independent candidate, Mr. William Stokes, and a successful Independent candidate, in the same election, Mr. Evans Davies, who were represented by Mr. Gwyn Davies.

Mr. Benjamin Morgan told the Judge he had signed the candidates' declaration in early September, and not on June 5th.

Addressing the Judge, Mr. Gwyn Davies said: "If the declarations were filed on the date stated, then they are false, because they declare something that is wrong—that the printer had been paid. If they were not made until September, then maybe the contents would be true, but the document itself is false, because it has been back dated with intent to deceive."

No Imprint

A SUCCESSFUL candidate at the local election for Shipston-on-Stour Rural District Council on the 5th May, 1953, Dr. I. A. B. Cathie, of Barton-on-the-Heath, Warwicks., made an application to the High Court, on the 7th June, for an order excepting from the provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1949, an act which would otherwise be an illegal practice. He had distributed to electors duplicated letters which did not bear on the face the name and address of the printer and publisher. The application was made on the ground of inadvertence and

(Continued on back page)

QUAIR'S PAGE

IN the long run it is Jimmy Green who decides the fate of nations and lays down the course of history. For consider what happens when a Parliament is dissolved and a General Election is in progress.

The two great embattled Parties are in the field. (We notice merely in passing the foraging raids here and there by the Third and Fourth Parties.) Spectacular tours through the principal parts of the country are organised for the former Prime Minister and his rival. The hoardings take on a new rash of bills, posters and placards. Well over a thousand election agents forget there is such a thing as a forty-hour week. Candidates in equal number lose all their ordinary human attributes and become transfigured. Many thousands of orators—in golden times we called them leathernunged, but in this degenerate age when a speaker with an audience of fifty feels aggrieved if he has not the assistance of a microphone that term has become archaic—pour out their torrents of eloquence. From innumerable committees streams of canvassers—never enough, if you ask the election agent—mightily flow to beard the free and independent elector on his doorstep. Within the limits allowed by the Representation of the People Act, and sometimes without them, no expense is spared, and the aggregate cost is colossal.

WHAT is the real aim and purpose of all this expenditure and effort? The great speeches of the two leaders, the broadcasts, the posters and handbills, the eloquence of the candidates and their supporters in every constituency, the sometimes injudicious persistence of the canvassers, are not addressed to you and me. We know, and all who know us know, how we shall vote. We have more or less carefully thought out our political policy and philosophy, and now stand immovably to it.

It is all directed at Jimmy Green, the millions of him. But as a rule Jimmy does not go to the meetings that are staged for his benefit, although if one or other of the potential Prime Ministers comes to his town he will go to the show just as

WILL he? And HOW?

he will to a coronation.

And yet Jimmy has suddenly become a lively and argumentative politician, and in the factory or on the allotment or any other place where he takes his ease he will emphatically assert that it's in the bag for somebody or other and offer to bet you on it. This leads many to suppose, quite erroneously, that Jimmy's vote is "safe".

Far from it; on polling day he may or he may not vote, and if he does vote he may vote for either of the candidates. If nobody bothers about him personally, the odds are that he will not vote. If he does vote, it is usually for the side which through its representatives has shown the greater personal interest in him and has gone to some trouble to convince him that the result of the election depends on him. And even then it is vitally necessary to look round at his place on polling day, often more than once, and remind him that the poll closes at 9 o'clock.

THAT is why we canvass, and must canvass; and it is because Jimmy is what he is that the active canvasser who has grasped the significance of Jimmy Green is the most valuable of all the devoted voluntary workers who turn out day after day, evening after evening, to clothe an election machine with manpower. Jimmy settles the election in at least 500 constituencies, not just in the 150 or 200 which the principal political Parties nowadays describe as "marginal".

Egerton Wake, who was a great idealist as well as a great National Agent, once said, 'Anyone who imagines that the electorate marches to the poll to register its considered decision on the questions of the day is living in a fool's paradise.' No old hand at electioneering will disagree with this, unpalatable as the fact is.

So much for Jimmy Green at election times. We do the best we can with him. But do we do everything we can in the long years between elections? I think not, and next month we will take counsel together on this.

not from any want of good faith.

Section 95 (1) (2) (3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1949, reads :

- (1) A person shall not
 - (a) print or publish, or cause to be printed or published, any bill, placard or poster having reference to an election or any printed document distributed for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate, or
 - (b) post or cause to be posted any such bill, placard or poster as aforesaid, or
 - (c) distribute or cause to be distributed any printed document for the said purpose

unless the bill, placard, poster or document bears upon the face thereof the name and address of the printer and publisher.

(2) For the purposes of this section, any process, for multiplying copies of a document, other than copying it by hand, shall be deemed to be printing and the expression "printer" shall be construed accordingly.

(3) A candidate or election agent acting in contravention of this section shall be guilty of an illegal practice, and any other person so acting shall on summary conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

The applicant stated in an affidavit that he decided to send out a personal letter to the electors instead of a formal political address. The letter was duplicated for him by a firm of printers and stationers. The principal of the firm stated that he informed Dr. Cathie that it was not necessary for the duplicated letters to bear the name and address of any printer or publisher, as he then believed.

For the applicant, Mr. Charles Scholefield said that undoubtedly the applicant had committed an illegal offence. Unfortunately, the applicant had been wrongly advised. That was excusable because the previous Act (the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1884, section 14) contained the words "bill, placard, or poster" but not the words "or document", and before 1949 such circular letters could have been sent out. Granting the order applied for, Mr. Justice Ormerod said that the Court was satisfied that the matter had arisen through inadvertence and that there was no question of bad faith.

—remember they were then strangers to each other—for introductions and a briefing on the constituency and the plans. From Doncaster came Mrs. Josephine Curry, Joseph Rothwell from Cheshire, Stanley Gill from Basingstoke, Denis Lovelace, a 23-year-old League of Youth member, from Tottenham and Sidney Lamb, a "young un" of 69, from Canterbury.

They were very keen and anxious to get cracking. The Assistant Regional Organiser made many visits to the area to supervise the work and we held two further consultations with the team to study problems arising during this experimental activity.

Was it worth while? Well, the team work certainly proved so. In three weeks they called at homes covering 12,000 electors. 3,000 electors were found "out", but the team produced a marked canvass of 9,000 and recruited 907 new members almost equal to the previous constituency membership. At Amblescote, where there was no organisation, 107 members were enrolled.

The team has shown the constituency that a canvass is worth while, and ample evidence has been given that new members can be easily recruited — all five members reported they had a warm and friendly reception in all parts.

It is now up to the local members to follow-up the results—to bring the new members into the ward organisations and to now plan regularly canvassing efforts to complete the marked-up register for the entire constituency.

If this is done then the experiment will have been fully justified. If the canvass is not continued and regular contact is not kept with the new members then their teams splendid initial effort will have been in vain.

West Midlands H. R. UNDERHILL

Situations Vacant—cont.

SEVENOAKS C.L.P., covering 200 square miles of rural area, from Medway towns to Surrey borders, membership 3,000, financially stable, office 700 feet above sea level (but no living accommodation) needs a keen man or woman as Secretary/Agent. Ability to drive a car or willingness to learn essential. Keen happy crowd of workers. Salary and conditions in accordance with national agreements. Application forms may be obtained from Mr. Chairman, Dr. G. P. Thorley-Lawson, Rabymere, Badgers Mount, nr. Sevenoaks, Kent, to whom they should be returned by 22nd July, 1953.